

Hawaii Lieutenant Governor visits People's Daily Online

James R. "duke" Aiona, Jr., Hawaii Lieutenant Governor, talked with net browsers at the Strong China Forum of People's Daily Online, in [Beijing](#), capital of the People's Republic of China on July 29 (Beijing Time).

Can you recommend some of the hotels in Hawaii?

Aiona: In Hawaii, some people believe the cost of living in Hawaii is very high. And when we talk about the cost of living we mean the cost of housing, food, transportation etc. and in comparison to some other cities and some other countries, it is relatively high. But Hawaii is a paradise. As you know we have tropical climate all year round, we are surrounded by the Pacific Ocean, we have the beauty of our mountains, and the cleanness and our fresh year, and of course the beauty of our people who represent all the cultures of the Pacific and Asian region. We do have for travelers, very, many economical accommodations. I would recommend the website www.hawaii.com and they would give a comprehensive listing of all the hotels, special packages that we have offered and are offering. And webcams give them real-time photos and films on the very activities and locations of the hotels. In Wakiki beach in Honolulu, Outrigger is very economical. On the neighbor islands, we have some accommodations you'll find very economical, again, listed on the website.



Aiona: I'm glad to come to Beijing and China to share something of the tourism of Hawaii. I love sports, now I say something about myself. I'm a permanent resident of Honolulu. My father is Chinese. My grandfather is an immigrant from China's [Guangdong](#). By grandfather's father is a Taoist and he advocated Taoism. My father has one fourth of Chinese origin, one fourth Hawaii, half Portuguese. And till my generation, I have fifth eighths, 2/8 Portuguese, and 1/8 Hawaii. My wife Vivian has 1/2 [Philippine](#) blood and 1/2 white. We have four children and they have various bloods.

My father is quite closely tied with sports. Because of him, I started to play basketball, baseball and football since I was five. Now I am the coach of the best high school basketball team in Honolulu. So with this opportunity, I want to put up a notice. Any young people between 15 to 16 years old, if they want to be like Yao Ming, please come to play in Honolulu. You can contact the office of Hawaii in Beijing.

Besides what I just said, I do exercise every day. I do at least one hour of aerobics, one hour of bike and I run about three miles twice or three times a week to. As the best I can, I lift weight twice to three times a week. I think it is very important that everybody be cautious of what he or she eats and how he or she exercises. In Hawaii, our health costs are becoming a big issue because many of our residents have ignored exercising and dieting. So we have a large percentage of our residents who have diabetes, heart problems and some of the other problems that are related to exercise and dieting. So the governments are manipulating a health summit in the fall this year. I notice that a lot of the Chinese people have natural exercise because they ride a lot of bicycle in China. And I think that's good.

How much do you know about China? What is China like in your mind?

Aiona: This is my first trip to China. You understand what that means, I'm 49 years old. So all I know about China was my "Popo" (my mother's mother) and my mother told me. And for the most part it was all the poorness of China and the control of the government of China. I also know what I read in school. But now that I have been to china and three of the most progressive cities: [Shanghai](#), [Tianjin](#) and Beijing. And I come to appreciate more and I can understand what's going on in China. Back in Hawaii, I have security in my office, I have guards. And there was a little bit apprehension about this trip in terms of security. But since I have been in China in about a week, I have no fear I feel no apprehension or anxiety about security. China to me is very safe, people are very friendly. And the service has been excellent. China is a progressive country, which is good and bad. It's good because it help the country bring more income, attention and investment in the country, which makes life easier for its people. But at the same time, I can see, from the

social standpoint, it's not helping the Chinese community. It's distracting them from focusing on the family, staying together as a family because they are more focused on their work and making money and investment, instead of making the people happier, making the people more together as one, enjoy their time as a community and as a family.

How much will it cost and how long will it take to tour Hawaii, from Beijing?

Aiona: There are four major islands. Just as Mike Nelson, the director of marketing, said, if you want to enjoy the whole Hawaii, you can join a delegation but you'd better live in Hawaii. You need to spend at least 10 to 14 days, all the islands, and it costs US\$ 2000 to 3000.

Do you dance hula?

Aiona: No. I do not dance hula. However, more and more residents in Hawaii are learning hula. More and more people in Asia are learning hula. For example, they have over 20, 000 groups in [Japan](#). We want the same amount in China. So we have started by having a culture exchange in Shanghai and we want to bring it to Beijing.

Blue Hawaii, it's for honeymoon, isn't it?

Aiona: Absolutely. We have many, many beautiful natural places to enjoy honeymoon. Koolina resort specializes in honeymoon.

When talking about Hawaii, people always think about sunshine, beach, waves and palms, what do you think are the characteristics besides natural beauty?

Aiona: My answer to that is the people. Hawaii by far, than any other cities in the [United States](#), has more diverse population in regards to ethnicity and culture. And I just had myself and my children as an example. My ethnic background is not unusual in Hawaii. In fact there are many more residents in Hawaii who have much more diversity in ethnic than I. And we have learned not only to respect each other, but also live together as one community. And that is what I define Hawaii.

What do you suggest resorts in China in construction and planning?

Aiona: I think the infrastructures they have right now in the cities that I saw, are both positive and negative. For example in Tianjin, they lack more quality luxurious hotels; and in Shanghai, they have a lot of hotels but they are not addressing tourists that really want to travel to Shanghai, likewise in Beijing. In Hawaii tourism has been the No. 1 industry for well over 50 years. We have made a lot of mistakes, but we have learned from it and we want to share our knowledge and expertise with China and we hope China won't make the same mistakes. Especially in the coming of Olympics and world fair, we want to be of help to Beijing and Shanghai.

Could you introduce us some local language of Hawaii?

Aiona: First of all, the common greeting word "aloha", which means both "hello" and "goodbye". The next word is "mahalo", which means "thank you". The next word is "kane", meaning "man" and "wahine" which means "woman". So when I say "aloha e komo mai", it means hello, welcome, come on and enjoy us.

There are sometimes, earthquakes, volcano eruptions etc, in Hawaii, so how do you respond in case of emergency?

Aiona: Talking about emergency, there have plans for the tourists to communicate with their families. Fortunately, we have not had any natural disasters to that extent except a hurricane in the last ten years. And normally the hotels and civil defense agencies would set of a line for communication for the tourists and not only for we have shelter for packages but also for communication.

Hawaii is a paradise of drug dealers, smugglers etc, so how is the security there? How is the government dealing with criminals? How to ensure the safety of tourists?

Aiona: Unfortunately we can not eliminate the thieves, and drugs entirely but we are now the central

location for homeland security and more federal money for more federal police officers are assisting catching, apprehending and prosecuting drug dealers and porn. Our hotel association has developed what we would call citizen patrols, aloha patrol, where the employees and volunteers in many of the tourists destinations work in collaboration with the police to bring down the amount of wrongdoings against on our tourists. Homeland security departments have also spent a lot of money on infrastructure in internal security. The State of Hawaii with the hotel associations have been more proactive in notifying and giving our tourists more information how to prevent a lot of events in advance.

Aiona: In closing, I want to thank the People's Daily for giving me the opportunity to share more about Hawaii. It is a great experience. I've learned a lot. I will take the positive experience to the people in Hawaii and share with them. Mahalo! A hui hou, until we meet again.

By People's Daily Online

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